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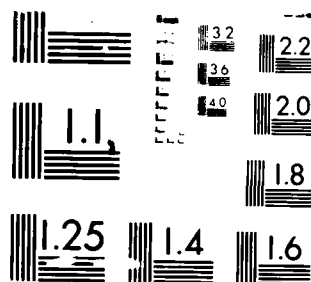
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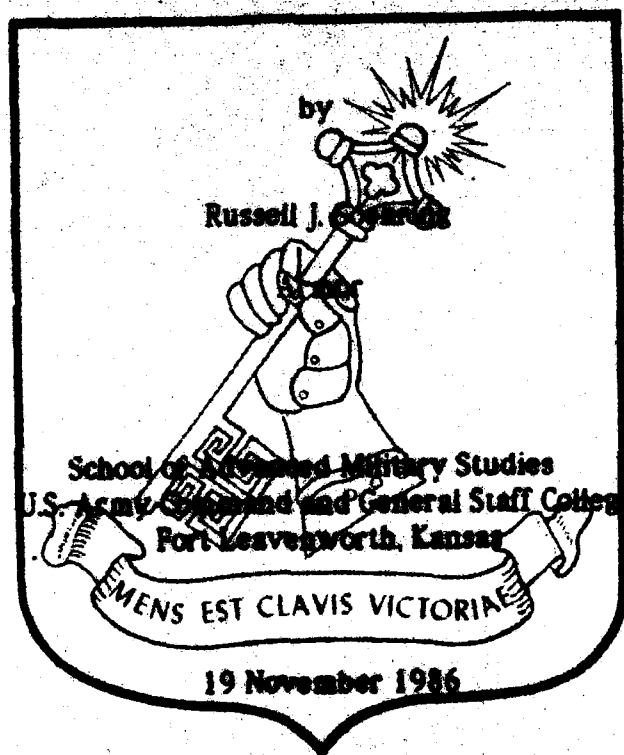
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The AirLand Battle Trojan Horse:  
The Use of Bypassed Forces to Increase  
Tactical Depth In The Defense



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Historical analysis of several situations from World War II and the Korean War provides examples of bypassed forces employed in a variety of ways. The selected case studies involve both light and heavy forces and are used to analyze the premise that such forces can be employed to increase the tactical depth of the defense. Based on lessons derived from these case studies, viable employment concepts and associated tactical considerations are developed for bypassed forces. These should then serve to underpin an employment doctrine for bypassed forces.

This study concludes with a discussion of the linkage between tactically bypassed forces and the Operational level to assess and postulate potential implications at the higher levels of war.

This study includes postulated definitions for bypassed forces, stay behind forces, and encircled forces and a comparison of the object or purpose of operations by each of the three types of forces.

The AirLand Battle Trojan Horse:  
The Use of Bypassed Forces to Increase  
Tactical Depth In The Defense

by

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## ABSTRACT

**The AirLand Battle Trojan Horse: The Use of Bypassed Forces To Increase Tactical Depth In The Defense** by Maj Russell J. Goehring, USA, 62 pages.

This monograph analyzes the use of bypassed forces in defensive operations to determine if they are a viable means for increasing tactical depth of the defense. Because of the fluid nature and rapid tempo of modern battle there will be situations where defending forces become bypassed by an attacking enemy. Traditionally, such forces were considered to be in a desperate situation, necessitating actions to effect their withdrawal "back to friendly lines" to reestablish contiguous lines of defense. This study approaches bypassed forces from the perspective that they possess a potential relative positional advantage against an attacking enemy and investigates alternative employment concepts to determine if this potential can be translated into a benefit for the defense.

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## INTRODUCTION

*It is the task of military science in an age of peace to prevent the doctrine from being too badly wrong.<sup>1</sup>*

History shows that there are several elements key to an army being victorious in war. First is the ability of an army to accurately anticipate the nature of the future war (its vision). Second is the peacetime preparation to fight based on the operational requirements derived from that vision. Last, once the war started, is the ability of an army to quickly adapt to battlefield realities not accurately anticipated. Of key importance to a peacetime army is the linkage between vision and preparation, i.e., preparation that matches the vision. As an army's vision of the nature of war changes, a corresponding assessment of the impact on preparations must be made. Accordingly, a primary peacetime responsibility of the Army leadership is the development of a vision of the future battlefield and then action to ensure that preparations to fight are consistent with that vision.

Today, our vision of the nature of the battlefield is presented in the US Army's capstone doctrine manual, FM 100-5, which states in part

*The high- and mid-intensity battlefields are likely to be chaotic, intense, and highly destructive... Even in conventional combat operations will rarely maintain a linear character. The speed with which today's forces can concentrate and the high volumes of supporting fires they can bring to bear will make the intermingling of opposing forces nearly inevitable.<sup>2</sup>*

An area where there is a questionable linkage between our vision and resulting preparations involves operations on a non-linear battlefield. More specifically, although we envision battle involving forces that are intermingled and bypassed, our doctrinal addressal of this appears inadequate. As may be deduced from the quote from FM 100-5, bypassed forces will be a common occurrence resulting from the fluid nature and high tempo of modern combat. Such an occurrence becomes even more likely given the existing paucity in "on the ground infantry" and extended fronts in the defense. Our responsibility in this regard then, is to promulgate guidance in the form of doctrine that is consistent with our vision of the future battlefield.

So what does US Army doctrine say regarding bypassed defending forces? Very little actually, as the focus of our doctrinal addressal is on encircled forces and then only on what to do once encircled. There is no known addressal on what to do when bypassed, or how to avoid encirclement. Aside from acknowledging the inevitability of bypassed forces, especially when defending on extended fronts, the US Army has not developed adequate doctrine to address the tactical employment of such forces. How should such forces be used on the battlefield? Can we employ them in accordance with the AirLand Battle tenets of agility, initiative, depth and synchronization? Furthermore, upon what theoretical concepts should a doctrine for bypassed forces be based?

Bypassed forces resulting from fluid and mobile warfare are not an altogether new phenomenon. There were many such situations during the Korean and Second World Wars. Examination of these experiences provides some insights regarding theoretical concepts and tactical considerations that should underpin an employment doctrine for bypassed forces.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze how a phenomenon we expect to be common on the modern battlefield can be used to our advantage. More specifically, it is to investigate the premise that bypassed forces can be used to gain increased tactical depth on the battlefield. Implicit in this premise is the view that a bypassed force is not necessarily in a disadvantageous, much less desperate, situation. It then follows that extraction or withdrawal of such forces based on an overriding concern for preservation of the force may not be the best course of action. For example, an alternative view is that a bypassed force has achieved a position of advantage in the enemy rear area and can be employed to conduct an offensive action. Such an option appears consistent with the offensive spirit and tenets of depth and initiative of AirLand Battle doctrine.

The apparent inseparability between a successful defense and increased depth has been recognized by great armies throughout history with the German Army of World War II providing one example. The Wehrmacht searched for ways of generating defensive depth, particularly in Russia, to restrict the enemy's maneuver and deny the Red Army the ability to achieve Operational<sup>3</sup> success. The quest for increased depth drove many of the tactical decisions of the German Army in Russia<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, examination of any potential means for increasing tactical depth in the defense is historically justified. For our purposes here, the questions we

must address are whether bypassed forces can be used to increase tactical depth, and then if so, how.

This paper analyzes bypassed forces to ascertain if they are a viable means for achieving increased tactical depth on the battlefield. This is accomplished in the following manner: Chapter 1 establishes the definitions of bypassed forces and tactical depth. Chapter 2 reviews some historical examples of bypassed forces. Chapter 3 provides an analysis of these historical examples, discusses employment concepts, and derives some key tactical considerations for an employment doctrine. Finally, chapter 4 concludes the analysis and draws some Operational inferences regarding tactically bypassed forces.

## CHAPTER 1

Although there has been recent increased interest in bypassed forces, we do not have a doctrinally accepted definition of such forces. The situation is further complicated by a general tendency to use the terms "bypassed", "stay behind", and "encircled" interchangeably. Of these, the US Army's manual, Operational Terms and Symbols, FM 101-5-1, defines only "encirclement". Accordingly, it is necessary to differentiate between these and for the purposes of this paper, the following definitions are postulated:

Stay behind Forces (Figure 1): Defending forces which are intentionally allowed to be bypassed in order to conduct a preplanned action in the enemy rear that will accrue a benefit to the defender at some future time. Their ultimate success is contingent upon remaining undetected by the enemy, thereby enabling them to retain the relative freedom of action and maneuver required to execute their mission.

Encircled Forces (Figure 2): Bypassed forces which have severely reduced freedom of action and loss of freedom of maneuver as a result of enemy control of all ground routes of evacuation and reinforcement.<sup>5</sup> This situation results from enemy design when bypassed forces fail to act or delay action. Historically, unless encircled forces breakout or are relieved by an external force, they are destroyed.

Bypassed Forces (Figures 3a,b,c,d): Defending forces which have reduced freedom of action and maneuver as a result of the non-contiguous nature of the engagement or battle and the enemy's relative position. Bypassed forces result from the fluid nature of modern battle and not from the intended design of the defender. It follows that there are varying degrees of being bypassed, i.e., as a result of the enemy's relative positional advantage bypassed forces will retain varying degrees of freedom of action and maneuver (graphically portrayed in Figures 3a-3d). In the extreme, forces can be completely bypassed yet not be encircled (Figures 3c and 3d). This results from the enemy not recognizing the situation or having intentionally elected not to encircle the bypassed defending force.

It can be seen from the definitions that there are fundamental differences between the three types of forces (summarized in Figure 4). There are also differences in the purpose or object of each of the forces. As can be deduced from the definitions, the object of stay behind forces is proactive and positive (do something which is preplanned to the enemy) while that of encircled forces is generally reactive and negative (avoid letting the enemy do something to it, i.e., preserve the force). What, then, should be the primary purpose or object of bypassed forces? Generally, bypassed forces are viewed as a desperate situation with the negative object of extraction to prevent encirclement or withdrawal to facilitate reestablishment of contiguous lines of defense. What must be determined is whether a positive object for bypassed forces is possible, and more specifically, if they are a viable means for achieving increased tactical depth on the battlefield.

Regarding depth, FM 100-5 states:



*Depth is the extension of operations in space, time, and resources. Through the use of depth, a commander obtains the necessary time to plan, arrange, and execute operations; and the necessary resources to win... In tactical actions, commanders fight the enemy throughout the depth of his positions with fires and with attacks on his flanks, rear, and support echelons. Such operations in depth degrade the enemy's freedom of action, reduce his flexibility and endurance, and upset his plans and coordination... Exploitation of depth in operations demands imagination, boldness, foresight, and decisiveness in leaders. Commanders must see beyond the requirements of the moment, actively seek information on the area and the enemy in depth, and employ every asset available to extend their operations in time and space.<sup>6</sup>*

Major Charles L. Crow, in his monograph entitled 'Tactical and Operational Depth', provides some additional insights concerning depth that are particularly relevant. Regarding tactical depth, Major Crow states:

*Tactical depth is that which is occupied by defending units whose missions severely restrict their freedom of maneuver, and the continued occupation of which will maintain the integrity of the defense thereby denying the attacker the opportunity to destroy or disrupt the mass of defending forces.<sup>7</sup>*

This is differentiated from Operational depth which is defined as:

*...that area beyond tactical depth in which both defender and attacker can achieve freedom of maneuver, and if gained by the attacker provides the opportunity to destroy or disrupt the defender without engaging the majority of the defenses.<sup>8</sup>*

Major Crow further points out that these notions of depth are independent of unit size or distance but "relate to a concept of maneuver or the lack thereof"<sup>9</sup>. Tactical depth represents that area where defending forces are committed to limiting the enemy's capability to maneuver. The aim of defending forces within the tactical depth is to restrict the maneuverability of the attacker"<sup>10</sup>. Battle that is limited to the tactical depth tends toward attritional warfare whereas battle that achieves Operational depth normally involves more decisive results<sup>11</sup>. To clarify this concept, Major Crow uses the battle of Kursk. Here, the Germans were unable to penetrate through the Soviets tactical depth and accordingly, were unable to exercise the total freedom of maneuver associated with the Operational depth. The result was a battle of attrition and the failure of the German forces to destroy the Soviet armies involved. It follows then that for an attacking army to economically destroy the defender's armies, it must break through the tactical depth defenses and achieve Operational depth where the opportunity for and consequences of maneuver are much greater (a concept the Soviet Army fully understands).

In summary then, tactical depth involves extending operations in space, time, and resources to fight the enemy throughout the depth of his resources to degrade his freedom of action and ability to maneuver with the ultimate aim of denying him Operational depth and its associated success.

## CHAPTER 2

Chapter 2 provides five (5) historical case studies relevant to the tactical employment of bypassed forces. These case studies are:

- #1: 17th Panzer Division at the Russian Front, Jan '43.
- #2: 1st Free French Bde at Bir Hacheim, N. Africa, May-June '42.
- #3: 34th Infantry Regt at Nakdong River, Korea, August '50.
- #4: Kampfgruppe Peiper at the Battle of the Bulge, Dec '44.
- #5: The Chindits in the Burma Campaign, '42-44.

Case studies #1 and #2 show how bypassed forces (heavy and light respectively) were successfully used to increase the tactical depth of the battlefield. Case study #3 depicts a bypassed force which, although possessing spatial depth, was not successfully employed to increase tactical depth. Case studies #4 and #5, although not specifically about bypassed forces, involve operations of forces (heavy and light respectively) behind enemy lines and provide lessons relevant to the use of bypassed forces in enemy rear areas.

In the interests of space, the descriptions of what occurred in each situation are abbreviated, with emphasis on the salient points. The utility of the case studies is in deriving lessons and considerations applicable to the use of bypassed forces in gaining increased tactical depth on the battlefield. Chapter 3 provides this analysis.

### 17th Panzer Division, January 1943, Russian Front

Significance: The 17th Panzer (Pz) Division, an armored force approximately equal to a current US heavy brigade, was bypassed by mobile Soviet forces attempting to encircle a defending German Army. The 17th Panzer Division maintained the continuity of the defense by employing offensive action that destroyed the bypassing forces, disrupted the momentum of the Soviet army offensive, and denied encirclement.

Strategic/Operational Setting (Map 1): Subsequent to having failed in rescuing the encircled German 6th Army in Stalingrad in December 1942, the 4th Army was ordered to withdraw to the southwest. Its mission was to hold the Russians as far East as possible to allow the German forces to escape from the Caucasus. Because of insufficient forces to cover the entire army front, a gap existed between the 4th Army's left flank and the nearest German forces to the North, i.e., between the Sal River and the Don river. The Russian Army had located the gap and was attempting to exploit by bypassing the 4th Army's forward defenses and driving to achieve Operational depth. On the left flank of the 4th Army was the 17th Panzer Division under the command of General von Senger.<sup>12</sup>

Tactical Setting (Map 1): In spite of aggressive defensive actions by the 17th Pz from 5-7 January, sheer Russian numbers forced the 17th Pz to withdraw westward from the little Kuberle and establish defensive positions along the Big Kuberle River. The 17th Pz division defended along a 25 mile sector of the Big Kuberle River. Its key combat

elements included two armored infantry regiments totalling 1400 men, one normal infantry regiment, a tank battalion of 36 tanks, 20 self propelled assault guns, 15 light and heavy howitzers, and thirteen 75-mm antiaircraft guns (about the equivalent of a mechanized brigade today).<sup>13</sup>

The Events (Map 2): On the left flank of the 17th Pz the enemy crossed the Sai river at several locations and began to occupy three towns in the rear of the division. Forces on the division left flank had been bypassed to a depth of over 25 km with a sizeable threat developing in the division rear area. The 17th Pz Division responded to the threat in its extreme rear with the 63rd Armored Infantry Regiment. At this point General von Senger concluded that the best hope of gaining time and forestalling complete encirclement was to attack <sup>14</sup>. Since the situation to his front was tenable, General von Senger decided to attack with his armor against the bypassing enemy forces in his immediate rear first. Counterattacking from the south, his armor eliminated the enemy forces in Zundow, Ilinov, and then Budenny. Shortly after noon, three Russian infantry regiments attacked the forward positions across a broad front. Again, von Senger responded with a counterattack. His armor battalion crossed the Big Kuberle river east of Vesely, drove into the enemy rear near Nizhnyaya Serebryakovka, and then turned south into the flank of the attacking Russian infantry regiments.<sup>15</sup>

The Consequences: The 17th Pz, initially bypassed on one flank and threatened in the rear, held its position, and employed offensive action against the threats to strike at the attacking enemy's rear and flank. In doing so, the 17th Pz disrupted the attacking Soviet army's maneuver and denied them the ability to Operationally exploit their initial penetration.

The attacking enemy forces were destroyed, the momentum of the Soviet offensive was disrupted, the 17th Pz retained the integrity of its defense, the 4th Army flank was protected, and more time was gained for German forces to withdraw from the Caucasus.

### **1st Free French at Bir Hacheim, May-June 1942, Gazala Line**

Significance: The 1st Free French Brigade was a light infantry force that was bypassed by numerous elements of Rommel's Afrika Korps. In spite of Rommel's significant advantage in mobility and firepower, the French demonstrated that a bypassed light force operating in the enemy rear could be effective. The French operated from a strong point in the Afrika Korps rear, tying down German combat power needed at the front and disrupting Rommel's resupply of the main battle.

Strategic/Operational Setting (Map 3): In late January of 1942, Rommel launched his second offensive against the British Eighth Army in North Africa. Rommel was successful at pushing the British back from El Agheila east, capturing the British garrison at Benghazi. The British were finally able to establish a defensive line that extended south from Gazala. On 6 February, the German advance paused to allow the necessary reorganization for the continuation of the attack at a later date to take Tobruk.<sup>15</sup>

Tactical Setting (Map 4): Allied defenses were composed of a group of strong points connected by extensive minefields and running from Gazala to

Bir Hacheim. The British southern and eastern flanks were open with the 1st and 7th armored divisions positioned in depth to cover these flanks while retaining the flexibility to counterattack to blunt penetrations near the Gazala coast approach.<sup>17</sup>

The Events (Map 4): Rommel's Gazala operation commenced on 26 May with German/Italian holding attacks employed to deceive the Allies into believing the main attack was towards Gazala along the coast road axis. Rommel used his entire mobile force to sweep around Bir Hacheim by night and achieve access to the British rear.<sup>18</sup> Fixing the French strong point at Bir Hacheim, Rommel bypassed the French forces by having the Afrika Korps and 90th Light Division swing farther south. The bypassed French in Bir Hacheim held out against the attacks of the Italian XX Corps and continued to plague Rommel's rear area by sending out patrols to interdict his supply lines. Short of fuel and ammunition, by nightfall on 27 May Rommel's continued offensive operations were in trouble. In order to open up supply lines to his forward forces Rommel was forced to cut a new route through the British 150th Infantry Brigade's area and its heavy supporting minefields. This operation, finally successful on 1 June, resulted in heavy losses to Rommel's forces. The French at Bir Hacheim held out until 9 June when the garrison was withdrawn.<sup>19</sup> On the evening of 9 June trucks from the 7th Motor Brigade Group met the French Brigade five miles outside their strong-point and successfully evacuated 2700 of the original 5000 man force to safety.<sup>20</sup>

The Consequences: The bypassed 1st Free French proved to be more than a thorn in Rommel's side as their actions delayed Rommel's

eventual success and made him pay heavily for it. The bypassed French, operating from a mobility disadvantage, were still successful at conducting raids from their strong-point to interdict Rommel's supply lines. Their success in restricting the Afrika Corps' freedom of action is attested to by Rommel's eventual decision to open another supply line through the British 150th Infantry Brigade's area. Furthermore, the Bir Hacheim strong-point tied down German and Italian army and supporting air forces at a time when Eighth Army needed as much time as possible to reorganize after their Cauldron counterattack failure.<sup>21</sup> The bypassed Free French had secured more time for General Ritchie's Eighth Army to regain the initiative, yet for other reasons, they were incapable of seizing it.<sup>22</sup>

### **34th Infantry Regiment at Nakdong River, August 1950, Korean War**

Significance: The 34th Infantry is an example of a bypassed light force that missed several opportunities to exploit the advantages of the situation. Rather than aggressively attempt to disrupt North Korean resupply and troop movements, these units instead opted for passive defense of their enclaves, hoping thereby to remain inconspicuous until extracted.<sup>23</sup> Although elements of the 34th Infantry enjoyed spatial depth relative to the attacking enemy forces, they never achieved increased tactical depth.

Strategic and Operational Setting (Map 5): The Eighth US Army was forced by the North Koreans to withdraw behind the Nakdong River in early



August of 1950. The subsequent battles of the Nakdong bulge occurred as part of the defense of the Pusan perimeter. This perimeter ran for about 150 miles with the western face defended by the US units. US units dispositions were: the 25th division vicinity Masan; the 24th division behind the Nakdong covering Changnyong; and the 1st Cavalry Division behind the Nakdong near Waegwan. The ROK Army completed the perimeter eastward to the coast.<sup>24</sup>

Tactical Setting (Map 6): The 24th Division defended east of the Nakdong on a front of 22 air miles, equating to 34 miles of the twisting Nakdong. The division's maneuver combat power consisted of the 19th, 21st, and 34th Infantry regiments (each with two battalions), a company of the 78th heavy tank battalion, and the 17th ROK Regiment (operational control). These forces assumed defensive positions during the period 2-5 August as depicted (map 6). The 34th Infantry Regiment, defending in the southern portion of the division sector, was responsible for a sector of 20,000 yards (twice the doctrinal norm)<sup>25</sup>. Its defense consisted of a series of platoon size strong points on the high ground east of the Nakdong and a battalion in reserve.<sup>26</sup>

The Events (Map 7): At midnight on 5 August the 5d Battalion, 16th North Korean Regiment launched its attack across the Nakdong River into the 34th Regiment's sector. The attacking enemy penetrated the gap between I and L companies and continued on, content to bypass the forces along the river in order to penetrate to the defender's rear. The North Koreans achieved success in penetrating to the road north of the Obong-ni Ridge. The 34th Regiment conducted a counterattack with the 1st Battalion hitting

the nose of the penetration vicinity Sangnigok and Kogono-ni. While the counterattack was underway, the bypassed and unengaged defenders at the river (I and L companies) withdrew without coordination or permission.<sup>27</sup>

The Consequences: The battle to restore the Pusan perimeter along the Nakdong River raged for an additional two weeks before it was won, required the assistance of a Marine Regiment, and resulted in heavy losses to both the 24th Division and the 5th Marines.<sup>28</sup> It is instructive to consider the potential consequences had the bypassed forces acted against the enemy by continuing to defend or counterattacking to close-off the crossing site. Such action may have enabled the 34th Regiment to achieve increased tactical depth by fighting the enemy at the river in addition to the Obong-Ni Ridge. This would have reduced the enemy closure at the Obong Ni Ridge area and assisted the 34th Regiment in defeating the penetration.

#### **Kampfgruppe Peiper, Dec. '44, Battle of the Bulge**

The Significance: Kampfgruppe Peiper (Kg Peiper) was a heavy combined arms force (approximately the size of a heavy US brigade) that operated in the Allied rear areas during the Battle of the Bulge. Although not a bypassed force, Kg Peiper's operations provide some insights for operations by heavy bypassed forces. Since an employment option for bypassed forces is offensive action in the enemy rear area, examination of Kg Peiper's operations provides relevant tactical and logistical considerations for such operations.

Strategic/Operational Setting (Map 8): Kampfgruppe Peiper was designated to play the "decisive role in the offensive"<sup>29</sup> the German Army launched in December 1944 that came to be known as the Battle of the Bulge. Germany had secretly prepared a large force whose mission was to conduct an offensive to split the Allies. Hitler planned to use his armor to attack through the Ardennes to Antwerp to cripple the Allied supply effort and then to destroy Allied forces north of the Antwerp-Brussels-Bastogne line (similar to 1940).<sup>30</sup>

Tactical Setting: The mission of Kampfgruppe Peiper was to spearhead the German 6th Army offensive, rapidly penetrate the Allied forward defenses, and attack to secure crossing sites on the Meuse River (employment very similar to the Soviet concept for forward detachments). Kg Peiper was a heavy combined arms organization of about 4000 men. Heavy weapons systems included: 72 medium tanks, a light SP flak battalion, 25 assault guns and SP tank destroyers, a battalion of towed 105mm howitzers, a battalion of armored-infantry, reconnaissance troops, and engineer companies. Additionally, Kg Peiper had attached over 700 men with equipment designed to look American<sup>31</sup>.

The Events (Maps 9-11): Early on 17 December 1944 Kg Peiper began its advance along its assigned route. Success came rapidly, meeting with limited resistance and achieving, by sunrise, the first objective-Honsfeld. Based on reconnaissance patrols operating forward of Kg Peiper, Oberst Peiper ordered a deviation from the assigned route west and attacked to Bullingen. This was captured easily, putting Kg Peiper 4 miles behind the US 99th Division's line at Losheimergraben and astride the MSR of the US 2d Division.<sup>32</sup> Here Kg

Peiper refueled using US stocks to continue his mission<sup>33</sup> From the US command's perspective, Kg Peiper was in a position to roll-up the flanks of the 99th and 2nd US Divisions. MG Lauer, CG 99th, stated "The enemy had the key to success within his hands but did not know it."<sup>34</sup> Instead of continuing North(toward Wirtzfeld), Kg Peiper turned west returning to the designated route. Avoiding main roads and towns where possible, Kg Peiper was met with limited and uncoordinated ground defensive efforts, with Allied air attacks presenting the greatest threat.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, attacks by the Belgian resistance became increasingly bothersome as Kg Peiper continued westward.<sup>36</sup> Finally, Kg Peiper reached the outskirts of Stavelot around sunset on 17 December. Here Oberst Peiper made the fateful decision, based on erroneous intelligence, that Stavelot would involve a major engagement with the US forces. Considering his and his men's weariness (having been on the road for 3 continuous days and nights), he decided to delay the advance for about 12 hours. This operational pause enabled the Americans to increase the defenses of Stavelot, move elements of the 7th AD to Trois Pontois and St. Vith, and prepare the key bridges in Trois Pontois for destruction.<sup>37</sup> The resulting strong and coordinated US defensive effort coupled with increasing supply problems marked the demise and eventual disintegration of Kg Peiper. By 24 December, Kg Peiper was forced to withdraw on foot with a mere 800 of the original 4000 men.<sup>38</sup>

The Consequences: Although Kg Peiper failed in its tactical level mission as a forward detachment to capture Meuse crossing sites, it can be argued that it achieved temporary Operational success. Kg Peiper forced the Allies to react, changing their focus from continued offensive operations to one of reactionary defensive operations, and "delayed an American drive to

close the gap between Malmedy and St Vith" until the conditions were no longer conducive.<sup>39</sup> The real significance of Kg Peiper for this study, however, is in the area of operations in enemy rear areas. The operations of Kg Peiper provide key lessons in logistical sustainment, intelligence, counter-reconnaissance, survivability, and synchronization that are relevant to employing bypassed forces in enemy rear areas. These are addressed in chapter 3.

### **The Chindits, 1942-44, The Burma Campaign**

The Significance: The Chindits were a light infantry force that operated in the Japanese rear areas during the Burma Campaign. Although not a bypassed force, the Chindits provide some insights for operations of light bypassed forces. Since an employment option for bypassed forces is offensive action in the enemy rear area, examination of the Chindits operations provides tactical and logistical considerations relevant to such employment. The Chindits conducted two major operations during the Burma Campaign. Although the first was considered to be a military failure, it provided lessons that enabled the second to be successful. For this reason, it is instructive to examine the first Chindit operation.

Strategic/Operational Setting (Maps 12a,b): "Having conquered the major portion of Burma, the Japanese began preparing for an offensive against Imphal and Kohima, the doorway to India..."<sup>40</sup> The intent of Allied operations was to eliminate the threat to India by driving the invaders out of Burma, open the land routes of supply to China, and keep China as a part of the Allied war effort.<sup>41</sup> "In 1943 the British developed plans for an

offensive into Burma from Imphal down to the Chindwin and on to Kalewa, with raids into the Shwebo plain. Stillwell and his Nationalist Chinese divisions were planning an advance into North Burma. A further operation into North Central Burma was considered necessary to compliment the operations. Troops were inadequate for an all-out offensive, and this is where<sup>42</sup> the use of the Chindits operating behind enemy lines fit in.

Tactical Setting (Map 13): The mission of the Chindits was the disruption of Japanese lines of communications with the aim of delaying Japanese build-up for an invasion of India. The Chindits were to operate on their own with a general line of advance from Tonhe on the Chindwin across Burma towards Banmauk and Indaw, the junction of the Mandalay-Myitkyina railway to the Irrawaddy river. The railway line over which the Japanese forces in North Burma were being supplied was the Chindits' initial objective.<sup>43</sup>

The Events (Map 13): On 18 February, 1943, the Chindits entered Japanese-controlled territory and split into several small columns. These columns set out to cut the Mandalay-Myitkyina and Mandalay-Lashio railroads.<sup>44</sup> The expedition's security was compromised a few days into the operation when the mail was airdropped accidentally on a Japanese outpost. The Chindits' complete order of battle, size, and intentions were therefore known by the Japanese almost from the beginning of the operation.<sup>45</sup> Accordingly, the Japanese did not divert the hoped for major force which would have delayed their build-up for the attack on the Imphal front.<sup>46</sup> By 18 March, the Chindits had temporarily interrupted the Mandalay-Myitkyina railroad and were continuing on to the Irrawaddy. By April, because of

losses resulting from increased Japanese opposition and disease, the Chindits cancelled the operation to cut the Mandalay-Lashio railroad and exfiltrated back to India. Final losses totaled more than 1/3 of the original force.<sup>47</sup>

The Consequences: The general consensus was that the first Chindit operation was a military failure, "the losses far too heavy to justify the slight damage inflicted".<sup>48</sup> Its major shortcoming was that it was a "small operation launched into the heart of a huge country without being dovetailed with any other operation. As such, it lost a great deal of its purpose"<sup>49</sup> and friendly forces never benefited from its effects. Slim, in commenting on the Chindits operations in his book Defeat Into Victory, stated

*The operation was, in effect, the old cavalry raid of military history on the enemy's communications, which, to be effective against a stout-hearted opponent, must be made in tactical coordination with a main attack elsewhere.*<sup>50</sup>

In spite of the inability to synchronize the effects of the Chindits operations with those of the main Allied forces, "this expedition laid the foundations for the subsequent idea of establishing strong points in the rear of the enemy, points from which columns could move out and harass lines of communications"<sup>51</sup> (very similar to the Free French Brigade at Bir Hacheim). Additionally, contrary to some expectations about light forces, logistical sustainment presented a monumental challenge for extended operations in the enemy rear.

## CHAPTER 3

This chapter develops lessons from the historical case studies and synthesizes them with AirLand Battle Doctrine to:

- Substantiate the hypothesis that bypassed forces are a viable means for increasing tactical depth on the battlefield.
- Discuss viable employment concepts for bypassed forces.
- Discuss employment considerations that should underpin a tactical doctrine for bypassed forces.

### INCREASING TACTICAL DEPTH

Chapter 1 described the theoretical concept of tactical depth. Recapping the salient points, we said tactical depth involved:

- an extension of operations in space, time, and resources.
- fighting the enemy throughout the depth of his positions.
- degrading the enemy freedom of action, flexibility, endurance.
- seeing beyond the requirements of the moment (anticipation).
- restricting the enemy's maneuver to deny Operational depth and its corresponding success.

Beginning with the spatial aspect of depth, Tukhachevskiy points out that "tactical depth is constantly extended as the enemy pushes his way into the rear and the defender feeds in more troops."<sup>52</sup> This conveys the notion that depth expands and contracts based on the spatial relationships between opposing forces.<sup>53</sup> As such, one would expect bypassed forces to provide



increased tactical depth because of their position relative to the enemy. However, this is not always true, as spatial depth does not necessarily mean increased tactical depth. This subtle difference is clarified by the Naklong case study. Although the bypassed companies along the river were in a position of increased spatial depth, no benefit was accrued the defense because they failed to act to exploit their spatial advantage. Consequently, although the spatial dimension is an important aspect of the concept of depth as it relates to bypassed forces, it can only be considered as a potential source of generating increased tactical depth. Increased spatial depth, in and of itself, does not equate to increased tactical depth. It is important to understand that tactical depth is an operational and not geographic term, i.e., has meaning only in relation to a specific situation, mission, enemy<sup>54</sup>. The linkage is to the purpose of the application of combat power and not to geographic distances. Consequently, unless bypassed defending forces act to translate their spatial depth into a current or future benefit for the defense, no increase in tactical depth occurs.

The 1st Free French Brigade at Bir Hacheim provides an example of a force which possessing spatial depth as a result of being bypassed, translated that into actual increased tactical depth. By strong-pointing Bir Hacheim and raiding the supply columns of Rommel's Afrika Corps, they had both a current and future impact on the friendly and enemy actions in that battle. It is important to note that increasing spatial depth forward of the FLOT, i.e., into the enemy rear area, is a valid and viable means of potentially increasing tactical depth in the defense. Such a notion is consistent with the offensive-defensive nature of AirLand Battle doctrine and a change from conventional thought that views defensive tactical depth as involving only spatial depth rearward of the FLOT. Unlike many of the German Army

operations in Russia in WWII that focused their efforts on increasing tactical depth through operations on their side of the FLOT<sup>55</sup>. AirLand Battle doctrine guides us to consider means of doing it forward of the FLOT.

The resource aspect of depth presents a dilemma for a commander who has a portion of his force bypassed. On the one hand, he can attempt to extract the bypassed elements with the intent of preserving that force for future operations. Alternatively, he can employ the bypassed force to accomplish a mission that will gain the defender a benefit that could very well require more resources to accomplish in the future. As an example, consider the actions of the 17th Panzer Division in Russia. General Von Senger was faced with a bypass on his left flank by a sizeable Russian force to a depth of 25 Km. His dilemma was whether to maintain the integrity of his defense and reestablish a defensive line further to the West, or exploit the momentary positional advantage between his and the Russian forces and attack into the Russian flanks and rear. Although speculation, a consideration that probably entered into his decision was what is the best use of my resources right now to contribute to the intended end of the operation. As we know from the case study, Von Senger decided to exploit the advantage of his situation and counterattacked. He may have decided that the mission of buying time for the German Caucasus forces to withdraw would be accomplished with less resources by current action from a bypassed status than by reestablishing the defense further west.

The important consideration regarding depth in resources as it relates to bypassed forces is that these forces be considered not solely as a negative situation, but viewed as an element of combat power that can be applied at some point and time in the battle. Based on the freedom of action such

forces retain and the overall intent of the operation. such forces may achieve results that warrant their employment from a bypassed situation rather than extraction for future use. The important point is that in order to achieve increased tactical depth, as it relates to resources, bypassed forces must act, either by withdrawing to preserve their fighting capability for future use, or conducting offensive action to strike at an enemy weakness now. Inaction results in a resource that gains the defender nothing and accordingly fails to increase tactical depth.

Another aspect of the concept of tactical depth involves restricting the maneuverability of the attacking enemy. Any use of combat power to further restrict or hinder the enemy's ability to maneuver, especially to deny him the capability to conduct Operational maneuver, is an increase in tactical depth. Accordingly, given the spatial relation between bypassed and attacking forces, bypassed forces have the potential of restricting the enemy's maneuver options. Again, however, bypassed forces must act against the attacking enemy in order to translate this spatial depth into increased tactical depth. As an example, the 1st Free French Brigade at Bir Hacheim exploited their positional advantage to strike against Rommel's supply columns. Their success at increasing the tactical depth of the Allied forces is attested to by the fact that Rommel was forced to attack into an Allied strength (the British 150th Infantry Brigade and heavy minefields) to open new supply routes so he could continue his maneuver. Bypassed forces, because of their position relative to an attacking enemy, are ideally suited to restrict the maneuver of enemy forces and thereby increase the tactical depth of the defense. To achieve this, bypassed forces must act.

The employment concepts and tactical considerations for doing this are discussed later in this chapter.

The final aspect of tactical depth involves the element of time. The notion here is that depth is achieved in time when combat power is applied in the current battle to produce a desired effect in the future. Implicit to this notion is the conscious use of combat power to produce an anticipated effect in the future. As an example, the interdiction of Rommel's supply columns at Bir Hacheim provided limited immediate benefit to the Allies. Rather, the effect and potential benefit of these actions lay in the future, i.e., in adversely affecting Rommel's operations so that the British could take advantage of his resulting unfavorable situation. Unfortunately, the British did not exploit the benefits of this effect, i.e., they failed to link the actions of 1st Free French with the main defending forces. Such a failure resulted from an inability to synchronize the effects of French actions with the main defense action, i.e., to arrange battlefield activities in time, space and purpose to produce maximum relative combat power at a decisive point.<sup>56</sup> Accordingly, when considering the employment of bypassed forces, one must consciously determine the desired effect such employment should produce. This effect must be linked and contribute to the intended end of the overall defensive effort. Furthermore, this effect must be synchronized with the effects of action by the main defensive force in order to produce maximum combat power at a selected time and place. In this manner, bypassed forces can be employed to increase tactical depth relative to the element of time.

In summary, bypassed forces, as a result of their position relative to the enemy, possess the potential for increasing the tactical depth of the defense

In order to realize this potential, bypassed forces must act, either to strike at the attacking enemy, or to preserve their fighting capability for the future. The theoretical concept known as defensive culminating point, developed by Clausewitz, describes this notion of "necessary action". According to Clausewitz, a defending force has reached its defensive culminating point when there is no longer an advantage to be gained by waiting, i.e., the defender must act. The situation with bypassed forces is exactly that. For a bypassed force to continue to wait only results in greater loss of freedom of action and maneuver and an increasing likelihood of encirclement for that force. Consequently, in order for bypassed forces to increase the tactical depth of the defense, they must act. Employment concepts for doing this are the subject of the next section.

### **EMPLOYMENT CONCEPTS**

Having established that bypassed forces can increase the tactical depth of a defense, we now direct our attention to how this is accomplished. In determining what action a bypassed force should take, the notion of intended end, or what the higher commander is trying to accomplish is paramount. There are numerous battlefield considerations that impact on the decision of how to employ the bypassed force, not the least of which are logistics and C3I. These are discussed in part III of this chapter. The key point is that bypassed forces are employed to do something that contributes to what the overall operation is designed to accomplish. As such, the bypassed force has an intended end within the scheme of the overall operation. This constitutes the "what" and "why" of their employment and is driven by the battlefield considerations of the specific tactical situation. What follows is a generic discussion of the "what, why, and how" for employment of a bypassed force.

Because of the relative positioning between bypassed and attacking forces, bypassed forces possess the potential of reaping the benefits of maneuver, in this case enemy maneuver. FM 100-5 defines maneuver as the "movement of forces in relation to the enemy to secure or retain positional advantage"<sup>57</sup>. In theory, as two opposing forces pass each other, there is a period of time where the advantage of position is neutral, i.e., both forces possess equal advantage. Theoretically, the one who acts secures the advantage of the positioning. Generally, the force that holds the initiative, the attacker, is credited with the advantage because he is forcing the defender to react to him. But that does not preclude the defender from acting to secure the benefits of the two forces' relative positioning. If the purpose of maneuver is to gain a relative positional advantage to destroy enemy strength by attacking enemy weakness, then a bypassed force is in a position to do just that. Offensive action "to force the enemy to react to unexpected, unplanned situations which threaten the viability of his military operations"<sup>58</sup> is an option by which bypassed forces can translate their situation into a position of advantage. Such action is a means of aggressively projecting the current fight into the enemy rear areas with enemy assistance. In effect, a bypassed force is a reserve force in depth, forward of the FLOT, and its offensive action an indirect approach that exploits the advantage of its position and the element of surprise against the enemy.

German defensive operations against the Soviets in WW II were characterized by such aggressive offensive actions. General von Mellenthin advocated in numerous interviews and written articles that a defender must not wait to execute offensive actions. He believed that hasty counterthrusts of even small units were more effective at slowing and stopping Soviet

armored forces than a delayed, large scale, deliberate counterattack<sup>59</sup> Many times small unit offensive action resulted in seizing a localized initiative that was expanded in scope. Such is the potential of offensive action by bypassed forces.

Offensive action by a bypassed force is a means to seize localized initiative by forcing the enemy to react. The effect of a US force suddenly appearing and striking in the rear area of an attacking Soviet force would as a minimum compel the Soviet commander to react locally. When the actions and effects of the operations of the bypassed force are synchronized with those of the close-in battle, this localized initiative can be further expanded. The potential contribution of a bypassed force is in creating the tactical conditions that will enable the main defending force to produce a decisive action. As such, the target of offensive action for a bypassed force should link to the enemy force center of gravity.

In determining what this target(s) is, it is useful to briefly review key components of Soviet military doctrine. Soviet doctrine envisions a rapid penetration and bypass of defenders so as to get the defender to commit his reserves. Then they maneuver to achieve operational exploitation. Soviet planning is Operationally driven, i.e., Operational objectives establish the tactical level objectives and operations. Although the Soviets possess flexibility at the operational level, they are extremely limited in flexibility at the tactical level. Colonel Wayne Downing, in his article "Firepower Attrition, Maneuver" summarizes the potential weaknesses of the Soviet doctrine as:

- reliance of momentum on fire support systems;
- reliance of mass on timing between echelons;
- inflexibility at the tactical level.

Given this, there would appear to be several potential targets for attack by bypassed forces. First, recall that one of the ways bypassed forces can exploit their spatial depth to increase the defender's tactical depth is by restricting the enemy force's maneuver. Accordingly, offensive action targeted against one of the above weaknesses could disrupt the Soviet force's capability to maneuver tactically, thereby denying it the ability to conduct Operational maneuver. Potential priority targets for bypassed forces would include attack of enemy fire support systems, air defense artillery, and engineers. Such actions are designed to disassemble the enemy's combined arms capability, thereby disrupting and reducing his ability to maneuver and contributing to decisive action by the main defense.

Another employment concept involves a bypassed force interposing itself on defensible terrain between attacking Soviet tactical echelons to disrupt the enemy closure against the main defense. Such action combines the advantages of the defender with the surprise and spirit of the attacker and would result in disruption of the timing and tempo of the Soviet attack.

Finally, another employment concept involves the bypassed force seizing a key piece of terrain to support a counterattack by the main defensive force. This has a defensive flavor similar to the Soviet concept of forward detachments and our concept of projecting air assault forces forward for a link-up by a ground counterattacking force.

That such operations involve risk is undeniable. Yet, the true benefit of such operations is achieved only if their actions are linked to those of the main defending force at the FLOT. Otherwise, such employment is nothing more than attrition forward of the FLOT and a gamble that squanders resources otherwise better employed by withdrawing and using at a later



time. This is a key lesson from the Chindit operations case study in the Burma Campaign.

In summary, there are several viable concepts for employing bypassed defending forces to achieve increased tactical depth on the battlefield. Paramount in the decision is the intended end of the overall operation, to which the bypassed force is but a part. From this, one derives the role the bypassed force plays in contributing to the achievement of this end. Specific employment of a bypassed force is situation dependent but can span the spectrum from withdrawal for future use to offensive action (from a bypassed status) to affect the current and/or future battle. The decision notwithstanding, linkage between the anticipated effects of the actions of the bypassed force and those of the defensive force is fundamental for success. As such, synchronization becomes the main challenge in effective use of bypassed forces and is discussed in the next section.

### **TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Use of bypassed forces to translate their relative position into one of advantage and conduct offensive action against an attacking enemy force involves risk. This risk can be somewhat mitigated by application of certain tactical considerations. There are numerous such tactical considerations and what follows are those considered to be of greatest significance. These were derived from the experiences of Kg Peiper and the Chindits, both of which involved high risk operations behind enemy lines. For clarity, these considerations are grouped into the categories of C3I (command, control, communications, and intelligence) and survivability.

### C31

Communications: Communications between a bypassed force and its parent organization is critical in allowing the necessary coordination to effect synchronization. Bypassed forces must reestablish and maintain communications, even if periodic, with parent headquarters. Means available are dictated by the type and level of force bypassed and may include FM/AM radio, mutichannel, visual, and the indigenous civilian telephone system. Messenger, although slow and certainly less reliable in this situation, is another alternative. Use of personnel from the fifth column reduces the visibility and potentially increases the success of the messenger method.

Command and Control: The challenge of command and control of bypassed forces is two part. First, is the requirement for command and control (C2) within the bypassed force; second, the necessity for C2 of the bypassed force by its parent headquarters. Since synchronization is the major challenge in the effective employment of bypassed forces to increase tactical depth, we will focus our attention on the latter.

When a communications link exists between bypassed and parent forces near real-time explicit C2 can be exercised so that coordination of efforts and synchronization of effects can occur. This facilitates the use of the bypassed force for achieving increased tactical depth for the defense. Alternatively, when the communications link does not exist, there is a decreased potential for the actions of the bypassed force achieving tactical depth. Instead, such actions are classified as deep attack and generally result in nothing more than attrition forward of the FLOT. Accordingly, synchronization in the absence of explicit C2 is a challenge that must be met

if we are to use bypassed forces to increase tactical depth on the future battlefield. The practical question worth considering is "how can a commander synchronize the effects between the parts of a defense when he can not talk to the bypassed part?" Considerations for answering this follow.

Certain actions taken by the commander prior to battle lay the groundwork upon which any potential synchronization between the parts can occur during the battle. First and foremost is the development and articulation of a clearly defined intent, i.e., what the operation is supposed to accomplish and why. When the communications link is absent, the bypassed force operates within the last understood intent of its parent organization. As such, the intent expressed by the higher commander serves as the implicit C2 to guide action by the bypassed force. In the absence of any further contact with a parent headquarters, the commander of a bypassed force considers the factors of METT-T and executes a course of action that supports his higher commander's intent.

Another action a commander should take prior to battle involves explaining his visualization of the flow of the battle to his subordinate commanders. This would include such things as "where he would anticipate penetrations, where forces may be bypassed and what he would expect those bypassed forces to do to contribute to the intended aim of the operation". Quality IPB and war-gaming assist a commander in making these determinations. As an example, after considering the factors of METT-T, a commander may visualize a bypassed force from the covering force focusing its efforts on destroying enemy engineering/river crossing assets moving toward the FEBA (a major river) as a viable and critical mission supporting the overall defensive effort. This is not to imply that a battle

will unfold exactly as a commander has visualized. Rather, the true benefit of such pre-battle actions occurs when the battle does not go according to plans. That is to say, the potential for unity of effort will be greater because subordinates and superiors have given prior thought to and hence share a common perspective regarding what they would do when battle deviates from the plans. All of this contributes to an increased potential for synchronization of effects between the bypassed and main defense forces because of a shared perspective of the 'what' and 'why' of the bypassed forces actions.

The other key element that affects synchronization, 'when', is dependent on many battlefield variables and extremely difficult, if not impossible, to foresee prior to battle. A possible approach involves identifying specific battlefield indicators prior to battle, based on enemy tactical doctrine, that could serve as the 'trigger' for a bypassed force to execute certain actions during battle. Such an approach exploits the rigidity and inflexibility of Soviet tactical doctrine to serve as a "battlefield timepiece" against itself. To clarify this, consider the previous example of the river defense. Assumption of a temporary defensive posture by a Soviet attacker at the riverline is indicative of preparation for a deliberate crossing. The transition to a defensive posture could serve as the trigger for the bypassed force to initiate attack of enemy air defense systems, thereby permitting maximum effect from friendly air attack. Unfortunately, the problem with this approach is that an indicator may not be readily apparent to both the bypassed and main defensive force. As such, what "triggers" the bypassed force into action may not "trigger" the necessary action (simultaneous or sequential) by the main defense so as to achieve synchronization. Techniques (other than electronic) for notifying other friendly forces that the "trigger" has occurred

must be part of the pre-battle coordination. Visual means are one alternative with specific artillery "spotting rounds", pyrotechnics, and other visual signals as possible options.

It is recognized that it is extremely difficult to achieve synchronization of effects between separate parts in the absence of explicit C2. For that matter, it is difficult even with perfect communications. The approach described above is more than an academic exercise attempting to bring idealistic order to the chaos of war; rather it recognizes that "push to talk" is not the only means of exercising C2 to achieve synchronization on the battlefield. The realities of the future battlefield may in fact relegate the "push to talk" approach to second place.

In summary, in the absence of effective C2 of a bypassed force either because of an inability to communicate specific orders (explicit C2) or the lack of a clearly defined intent and shared understanding of the flow of the battle (implicit C2), the best course of action is withdrawal of the bypassed force. This preserves the force for future action and achieves depth in resources.

Intelligence. The rapid and drastic changes in situation characteristic of the modern battlefield make intelligence a critical component of combined arms operations. This is especially true for operations involving bypassed forces where accurate information is fundamental to their employment and survival. The actual intelligence capabilities of a bypassed force depend upon the specific tactical situation, i.e., the systems and intel links remaining as a part of the force that is bypassed. Yet, the use of HUMINT by a bypassed force represents a reliable and accessible collection means almost independent of the situation. The employment of reconnaissance patrols, similar to Kg Peiper and the Chindits, enables the bypassed force to gather

the necessary near real-time intelligence to accomplish its mission and survive. Priority intelligence requirements would be linked to the mission of the bypassed force and may include locations and movements of particular types of enemy units for attack. Additionally, identification of suitable ambush positions, location of needed supplies, and eventual contact with other friendly units can best be performed by the HUMINT capabilities within the bypassed force. Finally, in certain theaters of operation (Germany for example), use of the "fifth column" to provide additional information, especially concerning location and status of indigenous supplies, is a viable adjunct to the bypassed force's organic HUMINT.

### SURVIVABILITY

In order for a bypassed force to conduct effective offensive action against the enemy rear area it must survive in that rear area. Generally, threats to the bypassed force fall into two categories--first, the threat posed by enemy action against it and secondly, the threat posed by the difficulty in logistically sustaining its operations.

Enemy Threat: A general guideline for operating in an enemy rear area is to avoid contact with enemy forces of equal or larger size. Based on the experiences of Kg Peiper, this is particularly true when dealing with enemy armored forces. Unless the mission is the attack of uncommitted enemy forces by occupying defensible ambush positions between echelons, actions against enemy armored forces is inadvisable. The goal of achieving increased tactical depth by restricting the enemy's maneuver capability can be bought at a cheaper price than engaging enemy armor (ex. fire support, ADA, engineers).

An active counter-reconnaissance effort is critical to a bypassed force. The ability to remain "invisible" to the enemy is accomplished by conducting operations at night, avoiding movement on main roads and through towns, and stringent enforcement of OPSEC. Implementation of passive air defense measures is especially important as enemy air poses one of the most significant threats to a force operating in an opponent's rear area.

A final consideration, particularly applicable to an armored bypassed force, is the security afforded by remaining mobile. Successful mission accomplishment depends upon the ability of the bypassed force to strike swiftly, unexpectedly, and then "disappear". Once committed to action that discloses their existence, bypassed forces must exploit their inherent mobility to facilitate survival. As Mannstein pointed out:

*...the safety of a tank formation operating in the enemy's rear largely depends on its ability to keep moving. Once it comes to a halt it will immediately be assailed from all sides by the enemy's reserves.<sup>60</sup>*

Sustainment Threat: The single greatest challenge to a bypassed force operating in the enemy rear area is that posed by the difficulties in logistically sustaining it. The inability of both the Chindits and Ng Peiper operations to accomplish their missions was directly attributable to sustainment problems. Because forces become bypassed due to the dynamics of the fluid battlefield, it is difficult to accurately anticipate and make provision for their sustainment requirements. Improvisation, one of the sustainment imperatives of AirLand Battle doctrine, is fundamental to meeting the challenge. Actions such as capturing enemy supplies, locating and using indigenous supplies, cannabilizing and/or redistributing from

"destroyed" friendly/enemy units (i.e., the battlefield clutter), and periodic aerial resupply are examples of improvisation in sustainment. Once a bypassed force is committed to offensive action in an enemy rear area it must be sustained through mission completion. Otherwise, not only has it failed to achieve any increase in tactical depth, but combat power has been squandered that could have been used to increase depth in the future.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **CONCLUSION**

During the course of this paper we have examined the use of bypassed forces from both an historical context and as it relates to AirLand Battle doctrine. From the study of our historical case studies we derived the following conclusions regarding the utility of bypassed forces for increasing tactical depth. These should underpin a doctrine of employment of such forces.

- Bypassed defending forces, by virtue of their position relative to an attacking enemy, are a potential source of generating increased tactical depth for the defense.

- In order to translate their spatial depth into increased tactical depth, bypassed forces must recognize their defensive culminating point and act, either by withdrawing to preserve their combat power for future use, or by conducting current offensive action from a bypassed status against the *attacking enemy force*.

- In order to achieve increased tactical depth, any action by bypassed forces must be linked to the actions, effects, and intent of the overall defensive operation. Synchronization (explicit and implicit) is the discriminator between bypassed forces securing increased tactical depth for the defense or simply achieving attrition forward of the FLOT.

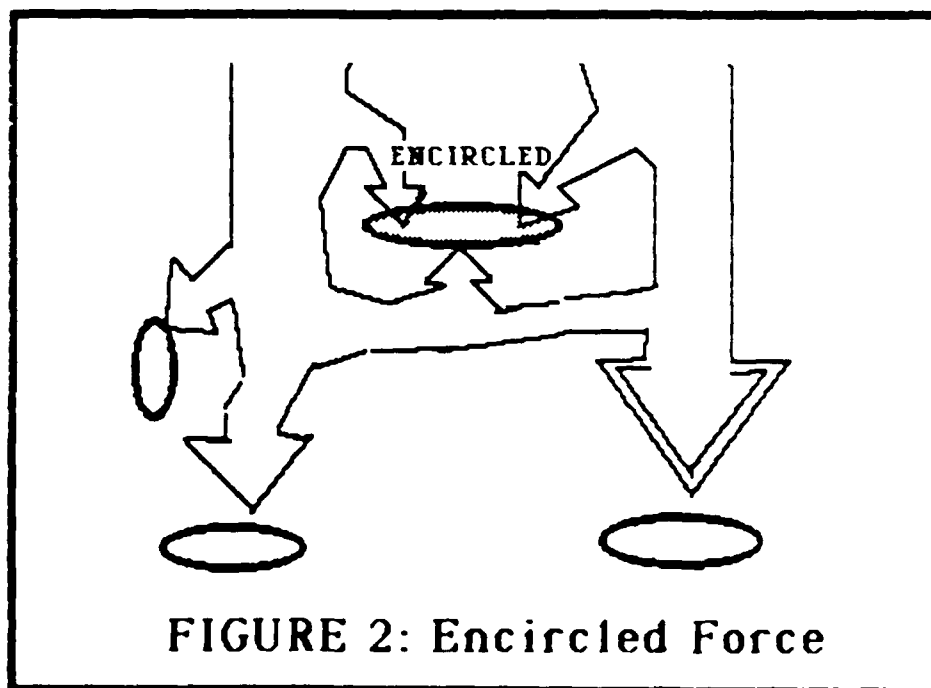
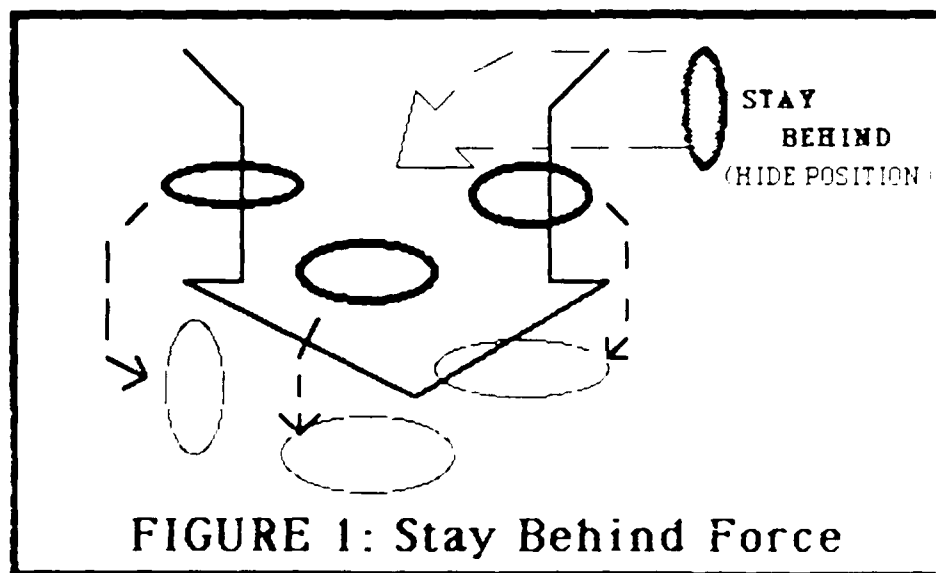
- Command and Control and logistical sustainment present the most significant challenges for effectively employing bypassed forces to increase tactical depth. In their absence, low level initiative and pure luck are the carriers for any potential increase in tactical depth.

Although the focus of analysis has been at the tactical level, any discussion of war fighting must recognize the inseparability between the

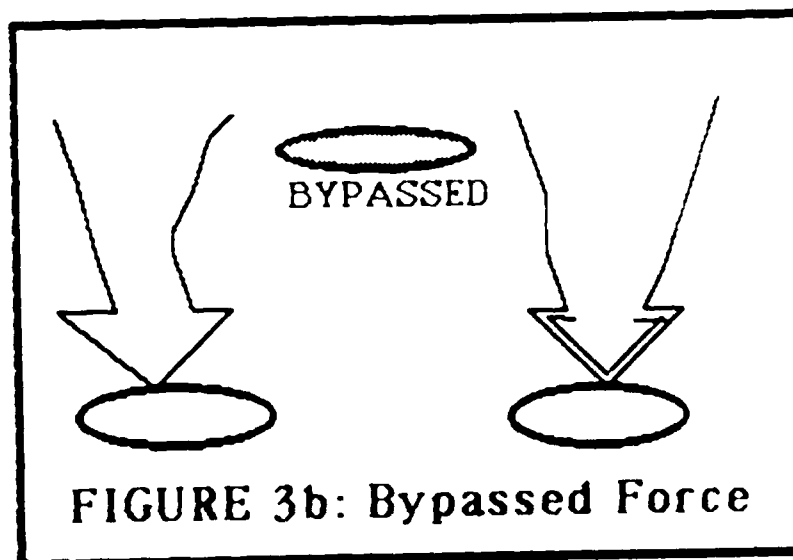
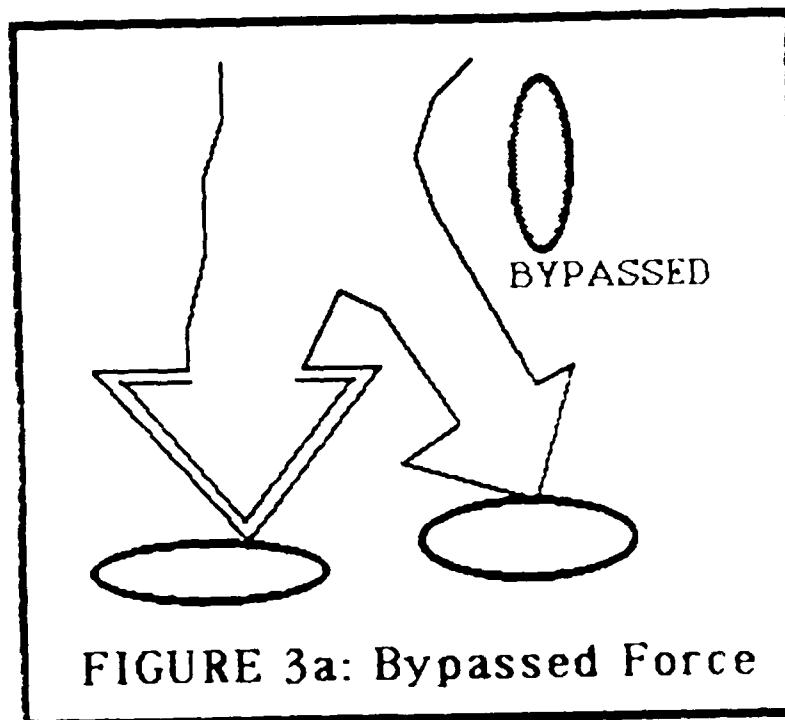
tactical and Operational levels of war. This is particularly true for operations of bypassed forces. As described earlier, an aim of operations by bypassed forces is the restricting of enemy maneuverability to deny Operational depth and hence Operational maneuver. By a defender increasing tactical depth, he is impacting on the ability of an attacker to secure Operational success. German-Russian operations during World War II provide numerous examples where one side or the other, by achieving greater tactical depth on the defense, denied the attacker Operational depth, maneuver, and hence success. Operations by bypassed Russian units against the German 168th Infantry Division in July 1941 accomplished just this and are credited with redirecting the Operational aim of the German Armies from the offensive to tidying up the battlefield to secure the German flanks against lurking Red Army contingents<sup>51</sup>. Therefore, the potential benefit arising from aggressive employment of bypassed forces transcends simply increasing tactical depth of the defense; they can in fact create the conditions for Operational failure of the attacker. Although this does not guarantee Operational success by the defender, it certainly establishes the preconditions necessary for that eventual success.

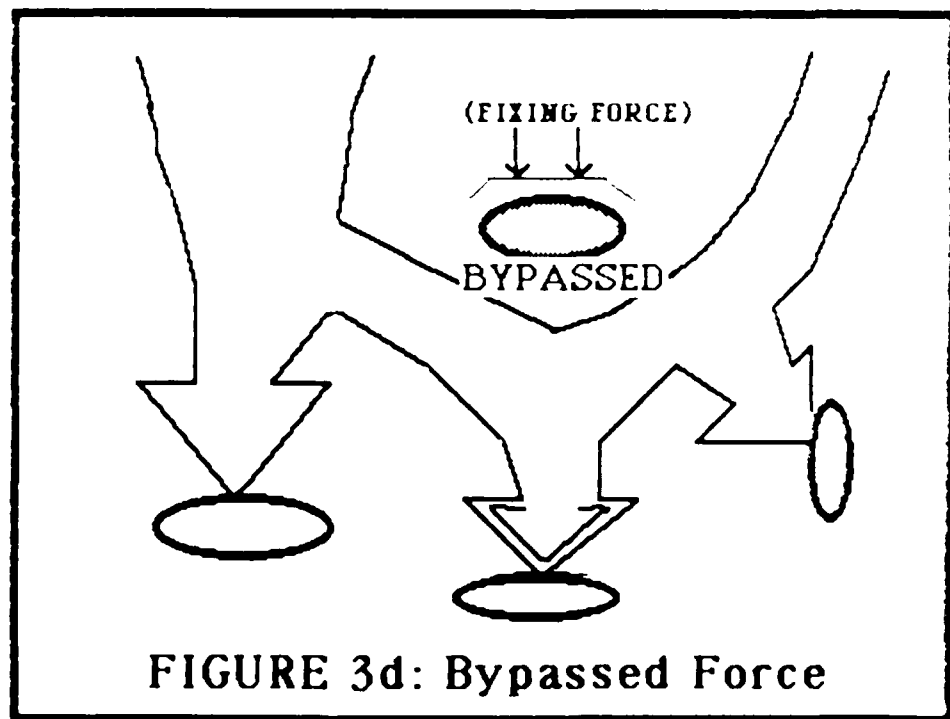
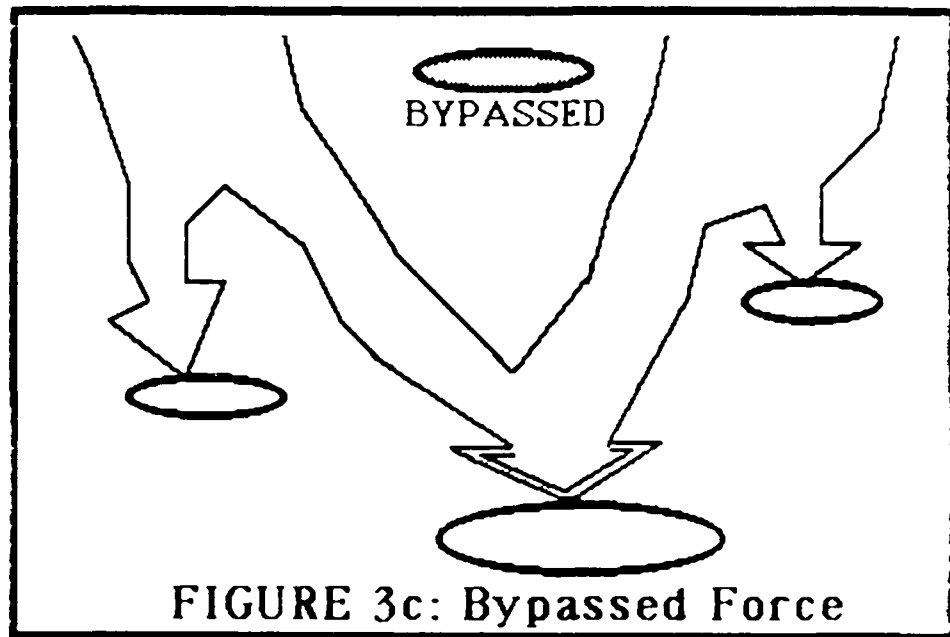
Despite all the potential tactical level benefits arising from aggressive employment of bypassed forces, their true success, like any military operation, will be measured at the Operational and strategic levels. We can not afford a scenario where their employment results in a situation

*...analogous to the courageous platoon fighting valiantly in a darkened building throughout the night only to discover at first light that the entire block has been in enemy hands for hours<sup>62</sup>*



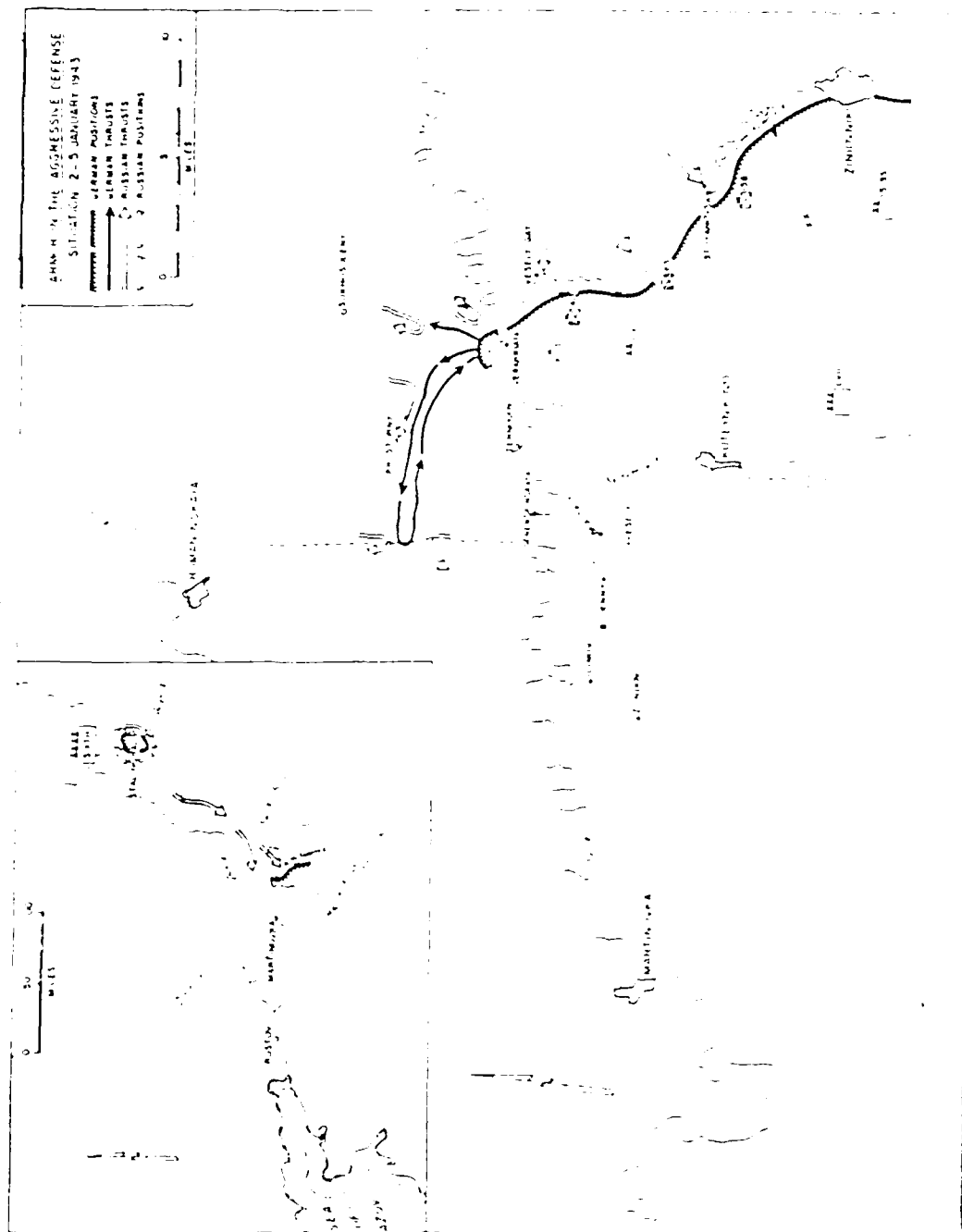
**NOTE:** Progressively decreasing freedom of action and maneuver for the bypassed force from figure 3a through 3d.

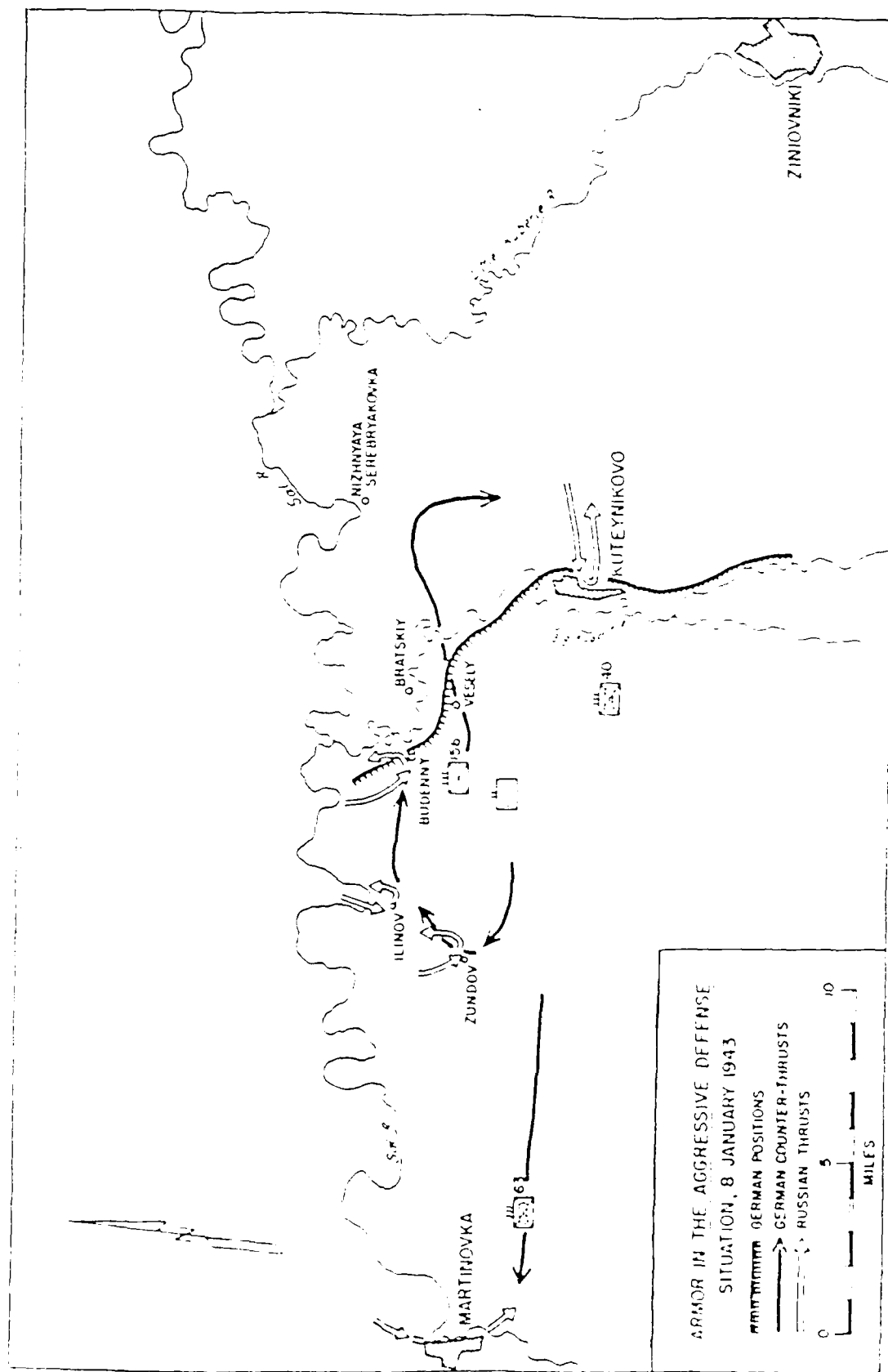




	FRIENDLY INTENT	ENEMY INTENT	REMARKS
<b>S T A Y B E H I N D</b>	Initially Allow Enemy to Bypass. Remain Undetected to Retain Freedom of Action  Subsequently Conduct Pre-Planned Operations against the Enemy (PROACTIVE)	Friendly Force success contingent upon enemy not detecting stay behind force	Stay Behind Force in enemy rear area because of enemy maneuver. Possesses potential initiative that is realized once activated from hide status. Actions of Stay Behind linked to main force actions.
<b>E N C I R C L E D</b>	Breakout and/or Conduct Relief Operation (REACTIVE)	Attack to destroy or gain surrender (reduce encircled enemy force)	Enemy possesses initiative. Encircled Force has severely reduced freedom of action, initiative and freedom of maneuver. Generally established in rear area as attack continues concurrent with reduction gap.
<b>B Y P A S S E D</b>	-Withdraw to avoid encirclement (REACTIVE) OR -Withdraw to maintain continuity of defense (REACTIVE) OR -Conduct offensive action from bypassed position (PROACTIVE)	-Continue with mission. (Unaware of bypass) OR -Continue with mission. (emphatic speed, disregard bypassed force, task for follow-on forces) OR -Continue with mission. fix bypassed force OR -Initiate encirclement Ops	Bypassed force in rear flank of attacking enemy force.  Bypassed Force possesses varying degrees of freedom of action and maneuver based on relative positioning of forces.  Bypassed Force has potential local initiative.

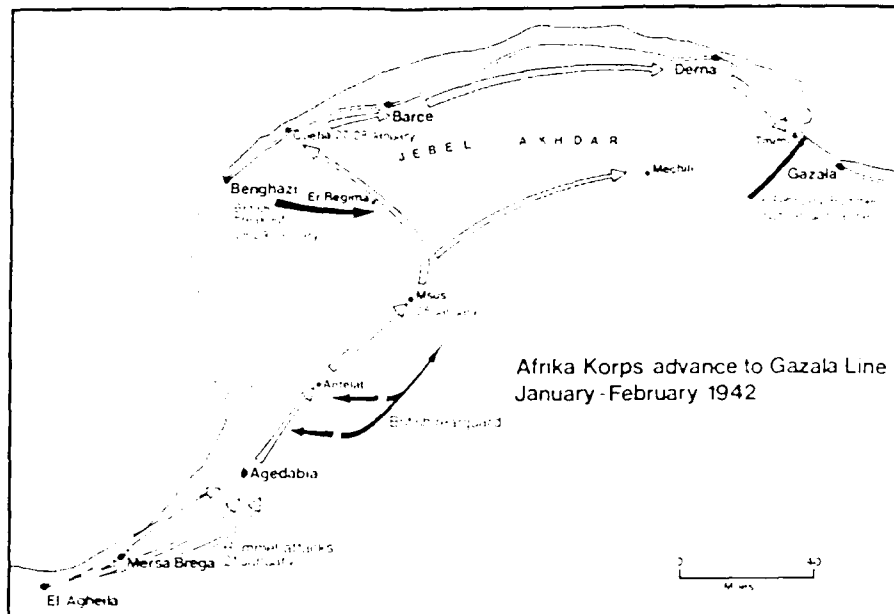
**FIGURE 4: Comparative Summary**



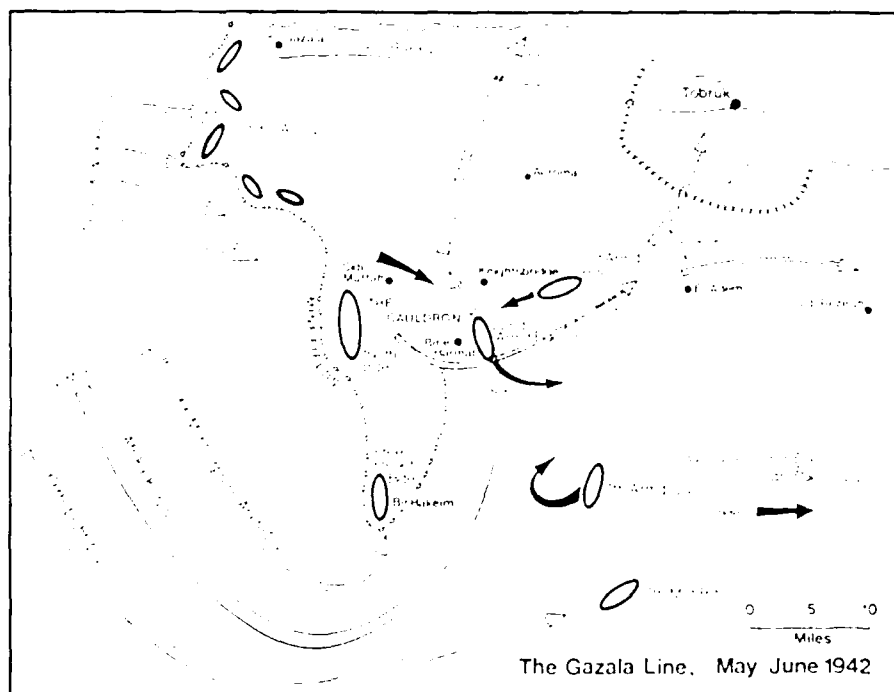


Map 24. Situation in the Bratskiy area, 8 January 1943. (Source: German Army, 1943, p. 100.)

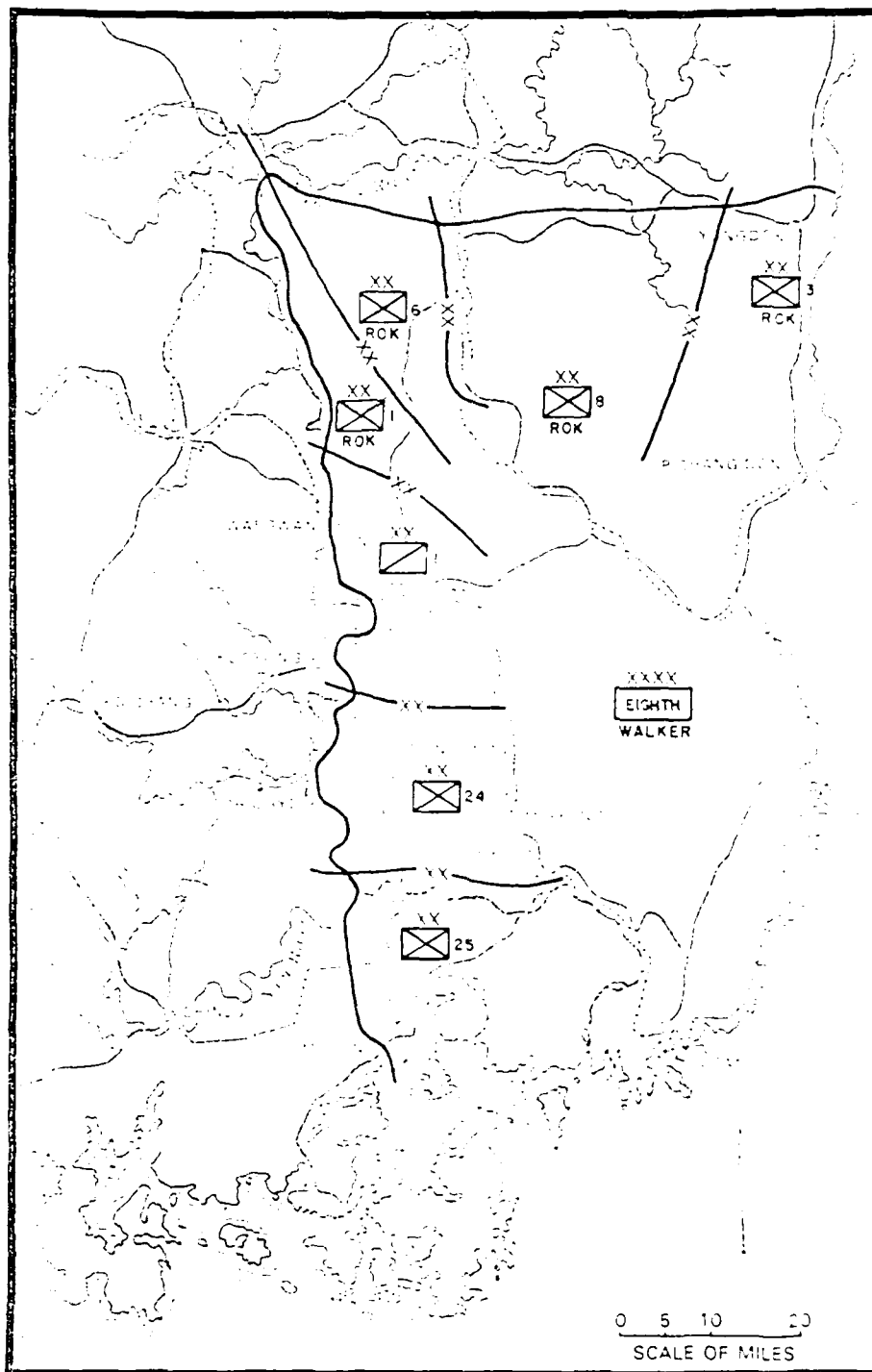




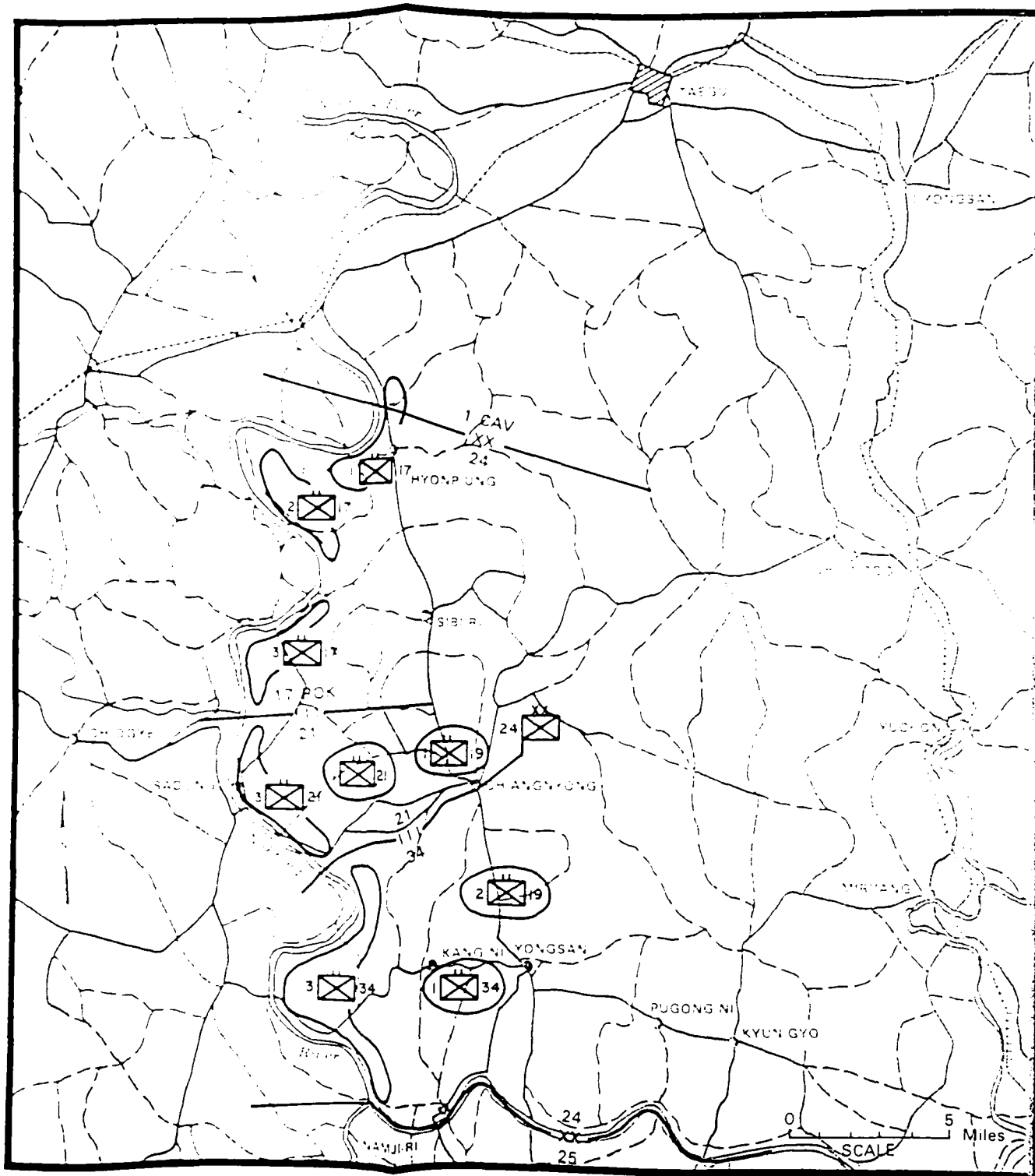
Reproduced from "Jackson, General Battles and Jarrell's



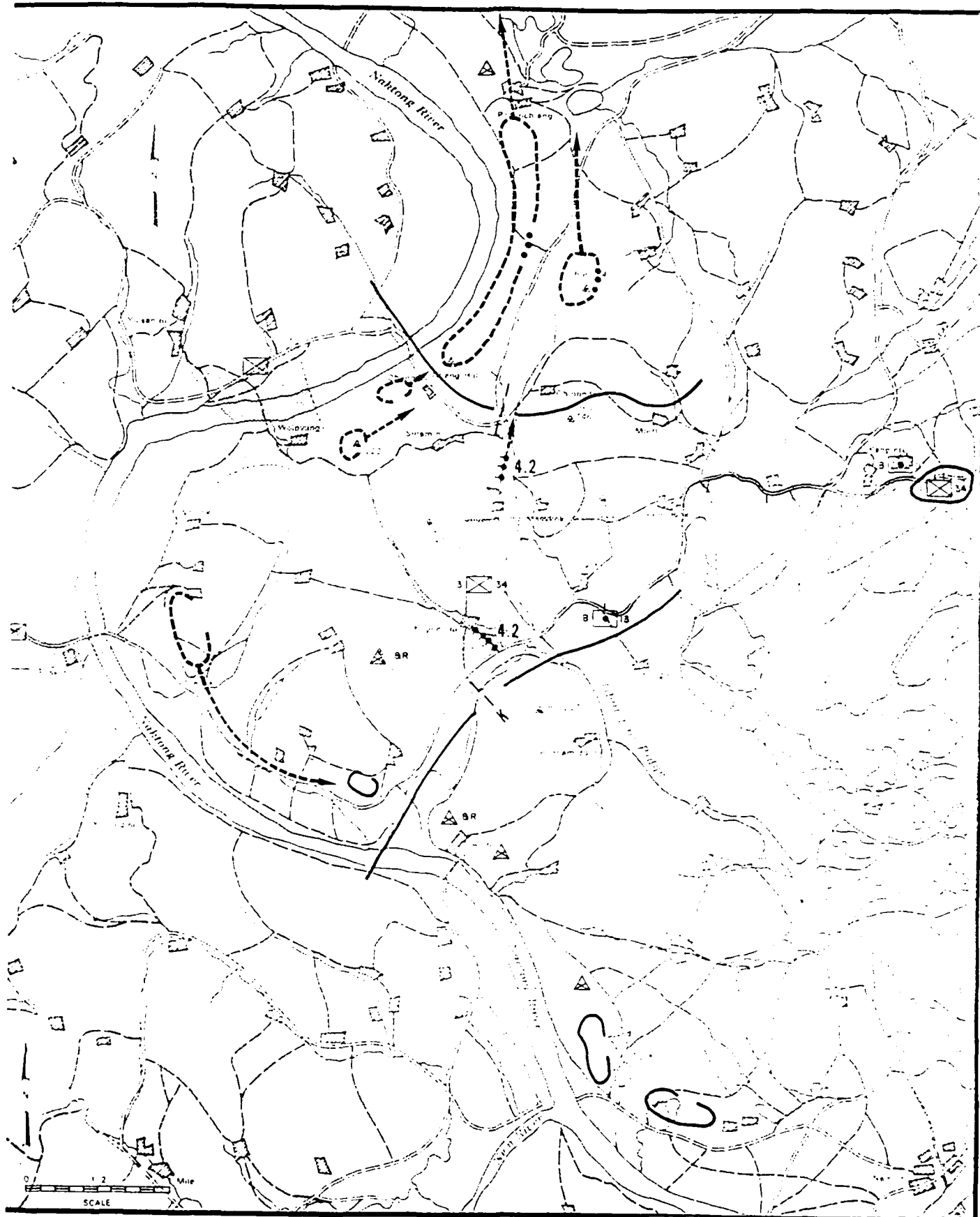
YAF 4: Tactical Operations on Gazala Line, May-June 1942  
(Reproduced from Macksey, Rommel Battles and Campaigns)



MAP 5: Operational Situation, Pusan Perimeter, Korea, 1950  
 (Reproduced from Robertson, Counterattack on the Naktong, 1950)



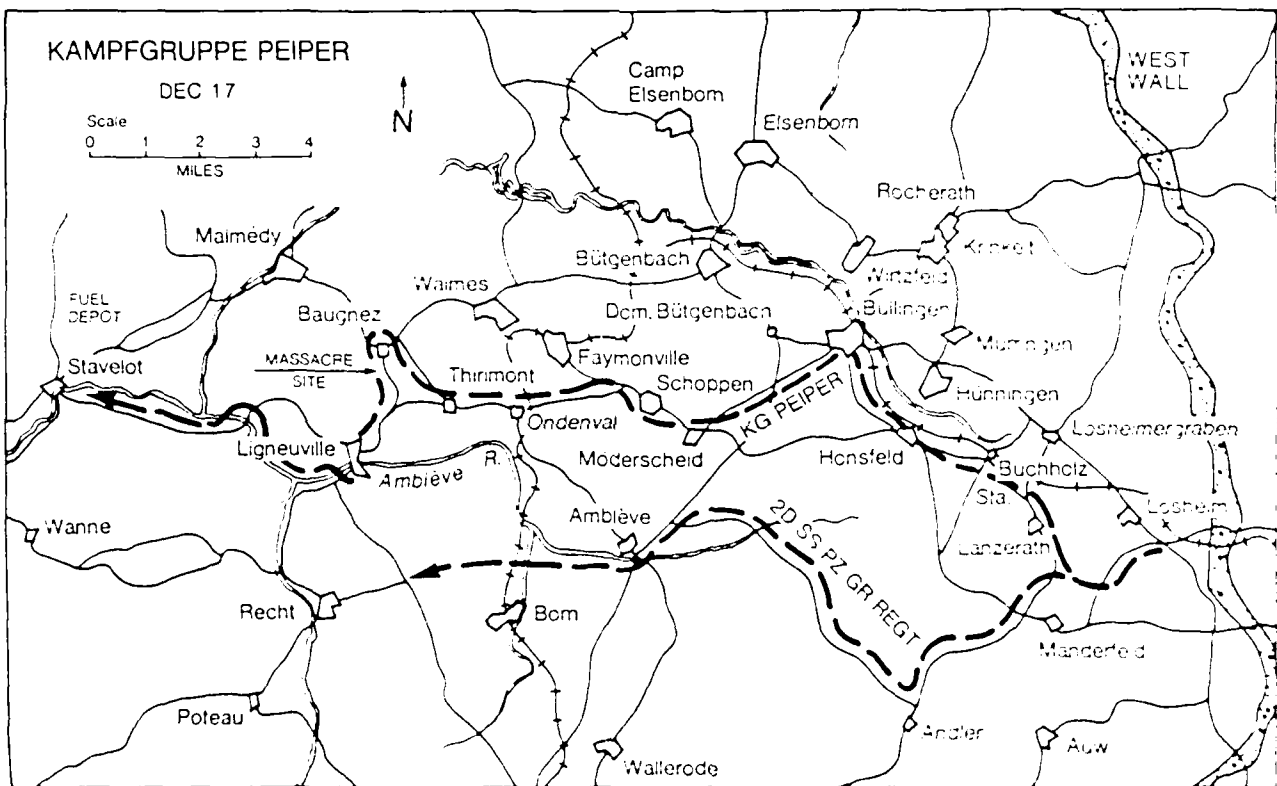
MAP 5: Tactical Situation, Nakdong River, Korea, August 1950  
 (Reproduced from Robertson, Counterattack on the Nakdong, 1950)



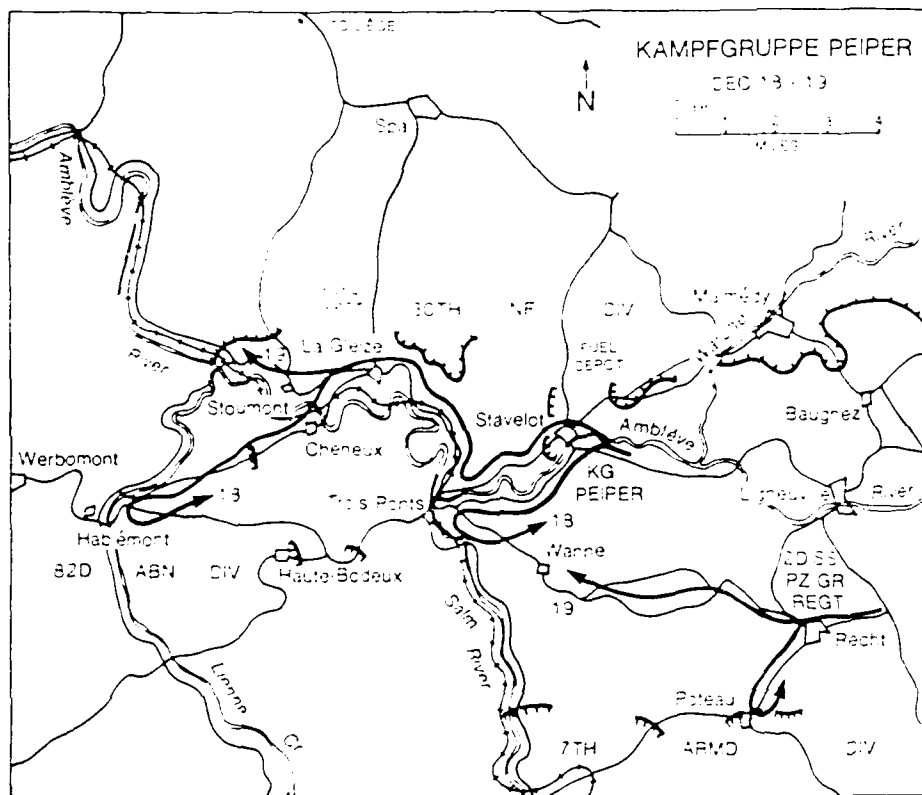
(Reproduced from Robertson, Counterattack on the Nakdong, 1950)

50 MAP 7: Tactical Operations, 34th Inf Reg

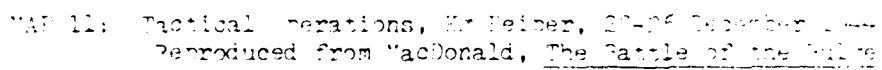




MAP 3: Tactical operations, Kz Peiper, 17 December 1944.  
Reproduced from MacDonald, The Battle of the Bulge

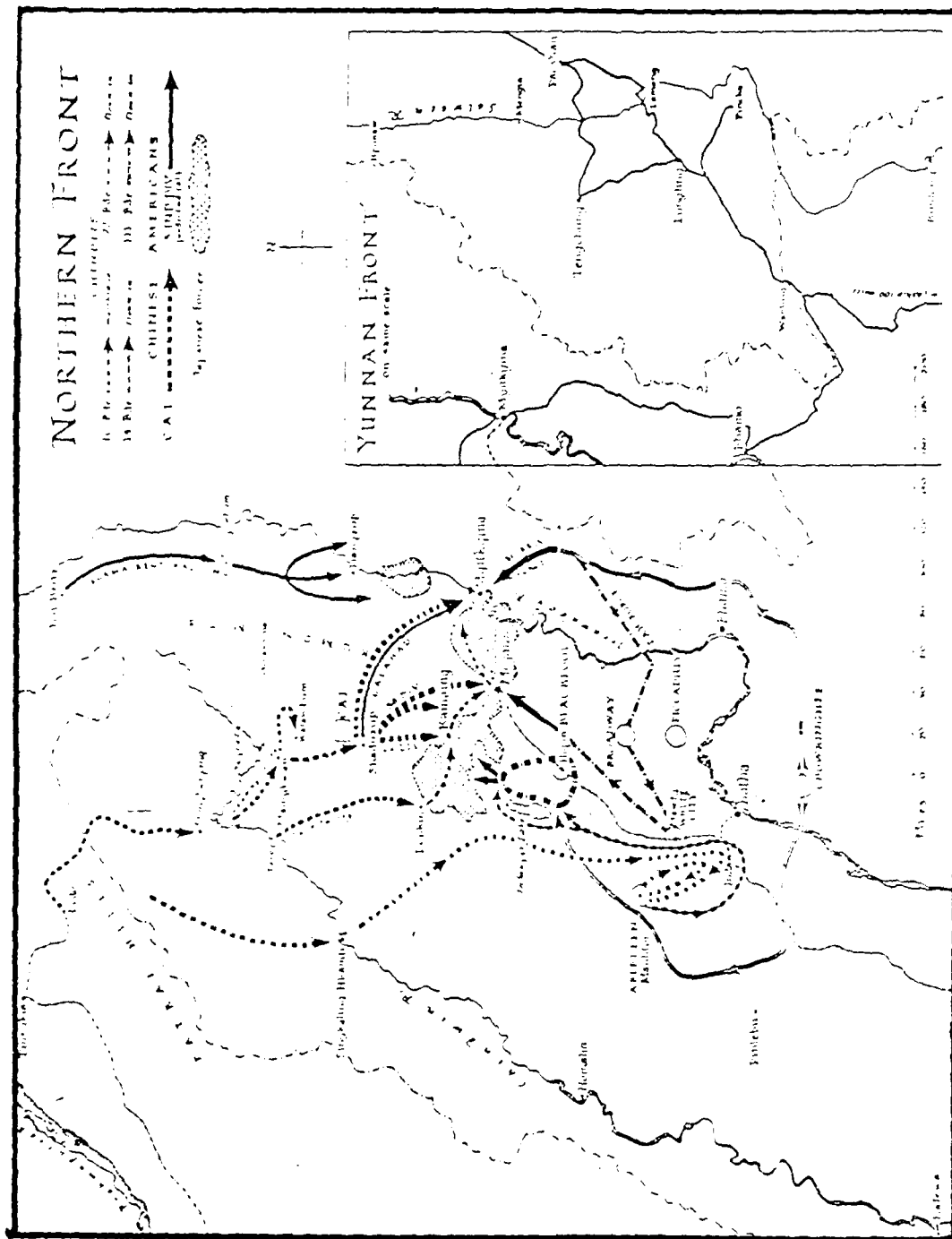


MAP 10: Tactical Operations, Kampfgruppe Peiper, 12-14 December 1944  
 Reproduced from MacDonald, The Battle of the Bulge









Map of the Northern Front and Yunnan Front, showing military movements and geographical features.

- 1 Michael Howard, "Military Science in an Age of Peace," Journal of the Royal United Services Institute for Defense Studies, vol 119, (March 1974), p. 10.
- 2 FM 100-5, Operations, (May 1986), Washington, D.C., p 2
- 3 Throughout the paper "Operational" is used to denote the level of war; this differentiates "operational" which refers to the conduct of military activities in general.
- 4 Timothy A. Wray, "Standing Fast: German Defensive Doctrine on the Russian Front during the Second World War", 1983, p 310.
- 5 FM 101-5-1, Operational Terms and Graphics, (Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., January 1985), p. 1-48.
- 6 FM 100-5, pp 16-17.
- 7 Charles L. Crow, "Tactical and Operational Depth", (May 1986), pp 2-3.
- 8 Crow, p3.
- 9 Crow, p 22.
- 10 Crow, p 18.
- 11 Crow, p 19.
- 12 "Division Operations During the German Campaign in Russia", Historical Division United States Army Europe, Manuscript P-143c, reprinted 1984 by US CGSC, p 12-91.
- 13 Ibid, p 12-91.
- 14 Ibid, p 12-94.
- 15 Ibid, p 12-92 thru 12-94.
- 16 The War in North Africa, United States Military Academy, (October 1948), pp 14-15.
- 17 Ibid, p 14.
- 18 Kenneth Macksey, Rommel: Battles and Campaigns, (Mayflower Books, New York, 1979), p102.
- 19 Ibid, pp 105-106.
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- 21 Macksey, p 108.
- 22 Jackson, p 222.
- 23 Glenn Robertson, "Counterattack on the Naktong, 1950", (Combat studies Institute, US CGSC, Ft Leavenworth, Kansas, December 1985), p 110.
- 24 Ibid, pp9-11.
- 25 Ibid, p 13.
- 26 Ibid, pp 13-20.

- 27 Roy E. Appleman, South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu, (Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C., 1961), pp291-297.
- 28 Ibid, pp315-318.
- 29 Charles B McDonald, The Battle of the Bulge, (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1984) p 197.
- 30 Trevor N. Depuy, The Encyclopedia of Military History, (Harper and Row, New York, 1986), p1112.
- 31 McDonald, p198.
- 32 McDonald, p205.
- 33 Ibid, p208.
- 34 Ibid, p209.
- 35 "Kampfgruppe Peiper", (Historical Division European Command, MS # C-004), p 8. This is an excellent account of the operations of Kg Peiper. Numerous lessons for operations of heavy forces within an enemy rear area are highlighted.
- 36 Ibid, p7.
- 37 McDonald, pp 236-238.
- 38 Ibid, pp 462-463.
- 39 Ibid, p 464.
- 40 LTC R. Narasimhan, 'The Chindits Campaign In Burma', (Military History Anthology, Combat Studies Institute, US CGSC, Ft Leavenworth, Kansas, 1984), p 88.
- 41 Depuy, p1164.
- 42 Narasimhan, p88.
- 43 Narasimhan, p 93.
- 44 Depuy, p1155.
- 45 Narasimhan, p93.
- 46 Ibid, p93.
- 47 Depuy, p 1155.
- 48 Ibid, p 1155.
- 49 Narasimhan, pp 88-89.
- 50 Sir William Slim, Defeat Into Victory, (Cassell and Company, London, 1956), p 163.
- 51 Narasimhan, p89.
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- 56 FM 100-5, p 17.

<sup>57</sup> FM 100-5, p12.

<sup>58</sup> Wayne Downing, Firepower, Attrition, Maneuver . (Military Review, US CGSC, Ft Leavenworth, Kansas, January, 1981), p 69.

<sup>59</sup> F.W. von Mellenthin, Armored Warfare In World War II . (proceedings of a conference held 10 May, 1979. Battelle Laboratories, Columbus, Ohio. Contract # DAAK40-78-C-0004), pp 42-43.

<sup>60</sup> Erich von Mannstein, Lost Victories, (Presidio Press, Novato, California, 1982), p 185.

<sup>61</sup> Wray, pp 43-49.

<sup>62</sup> John G. Hines, Phillip A. Petersen, "Is NATO Thinking Too Small?", (International Defense Review, IV/1986), p \_\_\_\_\_.

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